

September 18, 2009 response to Unite for Strength by Anne-Marie Johnson:

UNITING...? STRENGTHENING...? FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NOT YET VOTED...



Ken Howard, Amy Aquino and U4S are blaming MembershipFirst for the decline of SAG's Pension and Health Plans based on lost earnings from traditional SAG contracts that moved over to AFTRA. This amid the biggest downturn in the economy since the Great Depression. Our P&H plans, which are jointly administered by SAG and AMPTP trustees, took a \$800 MILLION Dollar loss due to investments.

-With all the dire warnings coming from Ken Howard, Amy Aquino and U4S about SAG losing scripted dramatic programming to AFTRA, where were the finger pointing and blame when AFTRA had to adjust their health benefits and pension accrual rate eight (8) months BEFORE SAG?

-Where were Ken Howard, Amy Aquino and U4S's concern when AFTRA chose to "go it alone", with regard to negotiating the 2006 Phase I Basic Cable Contract?

-Where were Ken Howard, Amy Aquino and UFS's concern when AFTRA chose to "go it alone" with regard to negotiating the 2008 Phase I TV/Theatrical Contract, based on an incorrect assumption that SAG was trying to "raid" an AFTRA soap opera?

-On one point it would seem MembershipFirst and U4S agree; SCREEN ACTORS GUILD WORK BELONGS IN THE SCREEN ACTORS GUILD. Ken Howard, Amy Aquino and U4S are complaining about potential SAG pilots going over to AFTRA. Good Point. MembershipFirst has been expressing concern about SAG shows going over to AFTRA FOR YEARS.

-In Oct. 2007, SAG, under MembershipFirst's leadership, released a 13 page letter in the Screen Actor Magazine illustrating the differences between SAG and AFTRA's basic cable contracts and the growing number of AFTRA basic cable shows. Instead of joining us in our outreach to SAG members regarding jurisdiction, Ken Howard, Amy Aquino and U4S were criticizing MembershipFirst, while at the same time circulating a petition demanding that SAG institute Qualified Voting, potentially denying tens of thousands the right to vote on SAG contracts. Is that being "united and strong"?

-From Feb. 2008 to Jan. 2009 the Screen Actors Guild was fighting hard to protect our TV/Theatrical contract and staving off the erosion in our residuals. What were Ken Howard, Amy Aquino and U4S doing during this time? Heading up a hi-profile actor/producer letter writing campaign, championing against a Strike Authorization Vote, weakening SAG's leverage at the negotiating table and signing the Written Assent that led to the firing of our NED/Lead Negotiator, disbanding of our TV/Theatrical negotiating committee and the gagging of SAG's President and Secretary-Treasurer. Is that being "united and strong"?

-If Ken Howard, Amy, Aquino, Ned Vaughn and U4S are so concerned about SAG's Pension & Health Plans, why did they deliver and enthusiastically endorse a contract that instituted:

- ZERO P&H contributions for ALL non-union Original Product Made For New Media with budgets \$15,000 per minute and less, produced by SAG signatories.
- ZERO P&H contributions from NO residuals for Original Product Made For New Media \$25,000 per minute or less.
- ZERO P&H contributions from 17/24 days of free airing of traditional broadcast productions streamed on the Internet/new media.
- ZERO P&H contributions from Pre-1971 movies and Pre-1974 television shows streamed on the Internet/new media. This sell-out of residual payments was strongly endorsed by Ken Howard, Amy Aquino and U4S. ("Someone's got to be sacrificed." Ned Vaughn)
- ZERO P&H contributions from the loss of clip consent in New Media.

MembershipFirst stands for putting the concerns of actors-performers FIRST.

MembershipFirst stands for the creation of ONE UNION, protecting the contracts, wages and working conditions of all actors-performers and overseeing ONE PENSION AND HEALTH PLAN, ending the splitting of P&H contributions between unions.

MembershipFirst stands for holding off on merging SAG's Pension & Health Plans with AFTRA's Health & Retirement Plans until our members are ASSURED that no SAG participant benefits will be diminished.

MembershipFirst stands for protecting SAG's jurisdiction.

MembershipFirst stands for actors-performers getting residuals checks in a timely fashion. Under our leadership you received your residual checks in 21 days. Under U4S leadership it now takes up to 75 days. Not only have you not "gotten back to work", you aren't even getting paid timely for the work you did.

MembershipFirst stands for adhering to Phase I and an AFTRA Convention Resolution from 1999, as well as a similar Motion from SAG, prohibiting SAG or AFTRA from undercutting contracts in shared jurisdictions.

MembershipFirst stands for protecting the right of all Screen Actors Guild members to vote on SAG contracts. We are against Qualified Voting.

MembershipFirst stands for showing up. Ken Howard missed 14 out of 19 SAG board meetings. Anne-Marie Johnson DID NOT MISS ONE MEETING.

Under the leadership of Presidential Candidate Anne-Marie Johnson, Secretary-Treasurer Connie Stevens and 33 determined and proud SAG board candidates, MembershipFirst, along with the members at large, will help lead SAG into the future; protecting SAG's jurisdiction, strengthening SAG contracts and improving the working and wages conditions for all of our actors-performers.

If you haven't voted yet, please read and view all that you can about the choices you have. For more information log onto: MembershipFirst.com.

Please Vote the entire Membership First slate:

Anne-Marie Johnson- President
 Connie Stevens- Secretary-Treasurer

David Jolliffe #2
Diane Ladd #3
Elliott Gould #4
Anne-Marie Johnson #7
Renee Taylor #13
Ed Asner #16
Anthony DeSantis #18
Martin Sheen #26
Charles Shaughnessy #27
Hector Herrera #30
Bernie Casey #31
Alan Rosenberg #32
John Diehl #33
Kevin Dobson #36
Anne DeSalvo #37
Ron Harper #38
Jeff Austin #41
Alan Ruck #45
Joe Bologna #47
Jane Austin #49
Connie Stevens #50
Joe d'Angerio #51
Jordana Capra #53
Renee Aubry #54
Clancy Brown #61
Michele Santopietro #68
David Clennon #70
Ed Harris #76
Marcus Lindsey #77
Robert Hays #78
George Coe #79
France Nuyen #80
Brett Cullen #83

Thank you for your support!

Anne-Marie Johnson